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ABSTRACT

The report concerns programs conducted by Montana counselors and educators in their efforts to better meet the needs of the Indian student, parent, and their families. The programs were sponsored by the local school districts, Montana, Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal agencies, and the Montana University System. The following were some of the objectives of the programs: improving the school's holding power; developing better home-school relationships; identifying those students with special aptitudes, interests, and needs; establishing an effective counseling program which would promote greater self-understanding and more realistic educational and career planning of Indian students; and providing Indian families with general education in the basic skill areas. Included in the document are opinions and ideas of participants of an Indian Education Conference conducted by the Department of Instruction of Montana. (EL)

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The Indian Student, Parent and Family - A Summary of Montana Educational Programs

This presentation will focus on some of the promising programs conducted by Montana counselors and educators in their efforts to better meet the needs of the Indian student, parent, and their families.

Programs sponsored by the local school districts, Montana Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal agencies, and the Montana University System will be discussed. These programs are designed to accomplish such objectives as improving the schools holding power; developing better home-school relationships; identifying those students with special aptitudes, interests and needs and to consider each of these in planning the school's curriculum; establishing an effective counseling program which will promote greater self understanding and more realistic educational and career planning of Indian students and providing Indian families with general education in the basic skill areas, pre-vocational experiences and family life instruction.

Included in this presentation will be a discussion of an Indian Education Conference conducted by the Department of Public Instruction. A brainstorming technique was employed whereby the conference participants voiced their opinions and ideas with judgment deferred. A handbook which synthesizes the ideas and opinions expressed by the conference participants will be distributed to persons attending this APGA Convention session.

Paper prepared for American Personnel and Guidance Association Convention, Reno, Nevada 1969, by James W. Fitzpatrick, Director of Guidance Services, Montana Department of Public Instruction.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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PROJECT TALENT

Project Talent, funded under the Higher Education Act, 65, Section 408, identifies talented youths throughout the state with the assistance of high school counselors and agencies such as public welfare and the neighborhood youth corps. Project Talent works with those identified as dropouts and potential dropouts, encouraging them to continue their education. An unusual problem in Montana is that of the landless Indians. Since their eligibility for assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs is very difficult to establish, much staff time is devoted to research on their family and tribal records.

The specific objectives of the program are encouragement, guidance and assistance in obtaining financial aid for the identified youths to complete secondary and post-secondary education. These objectives are fulfilled by individual counseling, distributing information on vocational technical schools and colleges, assisting in finding financial aid for individuals, locating part-time jobs and continuing counseling after the youth is established in the educational institution.

A directory of financial assistance was compiled.

12 field counselors were employed to:

1. work closely with local school counselors in identifying students for the program opportunity - 35% of those identifed are Indian youth; of this number, 90% are still in school;
2. counsel these students educationally, vocationally and personally;
3. encourage these students to continue their education.

In-service training sessions are conducted for these counselors by Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel, Office of the State Superintendent and United Scholarship Service personnel.

UPWARD BOUND

Three Upward Bound programs were conducted last year and three will be conducted this summer. Approximately 50% of those enrolled were Indians.

At the University of Montana the program objectives were to provide:

1. opportunities for educational enrichment;
2. opportunities to fill possible gaps in education;
3. a realistic taste of university life;
4. stimulation for continuing education beyond high school.

Tutor counselors were employed in each of the programs. For example, at Eastern Montana College, Billings, 14 tutor counselors were employed; five Indians and one Negro. They lived in dormitories with Upward Bound students, ate with them and attended recreational activities. They also assisted students in preparing assignments and taught the students how to use the library and other study facilities.

A follow-up program was initiated. Eight follow-up counselors were employed.

The director of the program stated that some enrollees perceived whites as being highly educated and financially secure. Also, some enrollees felt that the program was just another government program to give money to the Indian people. To obtain support for the program, one must gain their confidence and make the program realistic in terms of their future aspirations and goals.

A PROPOSAL FOR A BASIC EDUCATION

Life Education and Pre-Vocational Training Programs for Reservation Adult Indians Under the Manpower Development Training Act

This project was submitted by the Division of Extension and Continuing Education, University of Montana, in cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Montana State Employment Service, Division of Indian Health and Montana Department of Public Instruction. I understand a similar project was recently initiated on the Ft. Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho.

This is a 15 month project designed for approximately 72 Indian families and some singles. The purpose of the project is to prepare these persons for employment. To accomplish this objective, the enrollees will receive general education in the basic skills, pre-vocational experiences for orientation, stimulation toward an employability development plan for the trainee and will develop a vocational education training plan. It also provides family life instruction to not only the wives of the trainees but to single male and female trainees. A Day Care Center was established to free the mothers for such training.

To be eligible for the program, persons must be:

1. one-fourth Indian;
2. residing on the reservation;
3. healthy;
4. rated at 6.4 on a Metropolitan Achievement Test.

Preparing a person for employment is only part of the educator and counselor's role. The individual must be capable of adjusting to a new location, living in a neighborhood to which he is not accustomed and making new uses of his leisure time. The program was designed with this purpose in mind. In this program, innate ability and various motivational factors are prerequisites for entering the training program. There is no formal status grouping of trainees. Each trainee is free to move horizontally as well as vertically in building his skills and understanding.

As skills in basic education areas develop, a planned sequence for pre-vocational training is integrated with basic education and occupational goals are established as early as possible. All trainees are not engaged in the same pre-vocational areas.

Three counselors were employed, two of which were Indians. (Counseling involves three areas - employment, vocational and family.)

In addition, the employment service provides occupational and employment counseling and assists in formulating an employability plan.

One of the persons closely associated with the program stated, "The counselors in this program must be well trained in group dynamics and must possess the ability to work with groups. He must be active, not an administrator of papers. He must be willing to work long hours and must have a good background in career development. Also, he must be willing to work with community groups and industry, and he must be flexible. Above all he cannot expect to be 100% successful."

Of the 72 persons enrolled in the program, five have dropped out. All of the dropouts were single males or females.

EDUCATIONAL EXPLORATION ON THE CROW AND NORTHERN CHEYENNE INDIAN RESERVATION

Dr. Sally Wright, Associate Professor of Education at Montana State University, Bozeman; and Warren Stone, Counseling and Testing Center at Bozeman; recognizing a high percentage of dropouts in schools on these reservations decided to evaluate the curriculum and modify or change it, if necessary, to better meet the needs of the Indian children.

They soon recognized that in order to accomplish curriculum change, they must have knowledge of the students, not necessarily their mental ability but the behavioral concepts as well. The Gessell Developmental Exam was used for this purpose with assistance from Dr. Francis Ilg, Gessell Institute of Child Development, New Haven, Connecticut.

According to preliminary findings, Indian children should not begin reading until eight years of age. However, this assumption is still open to question.

The district will submit an ESEA Title I Project Proposal based on a survey of educational needs.

A PILOT PROGRAM IN THE HARLEM PUBLIC SCHOOL TO RETAIN SCHOOL DROPOUTS

In 1964, the administrator, counselor and staff, recognizing that 60% of the Indian students terminated their formal education before graduation, decided to do something about it.

The Harlem schools serve students from the Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation, some of which are landless Indians. Many of these children reside in the Hays-Lodge Pole area, in the Little Rocky Mountains, approximately 50 miles from the Harlem school.

With assistance from the State Department of Public Instruction and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, it was decided that the school officials should conduct a survey of parents, teachers and dropouts to determine probable reasons for the student's termination of school. The administrator and counselor conducted the survey and learned that many of those dropping out of school had an older brother or sister who did likewise and had generally had a bad experience at the school. For example, several reported being expelled. Many students said that they were considered discipline problems. It was also determined that the greatest number of dropouts occurred between eighth and ninth grades.

A program was designed whereby the counselor, dressed in attire fitting to that of the reservation, spent the summer months visiting families in the outlying areas. One of his objectives was to help students make the transition from grades eight to nine.

To do this, his efforts were directed at establishing good relations with the family. He stacked hay, hoed gardens, etc. He did not lecture them on the value of an education but was willing to discuss education with them whenever the subject was brought up. After several weeks of visitation, he arranged for the students to tour the school and visit informally with the staff. He explained school policies, rules, etc., and group discussions were conducted on such topics as the value of an education. Students residing in the community were encouraged to participate in the discussion.

The counselor has encouraged all students to participate in at least one activity. In addition, he sees each student at least once each week. Periodic visits are made to the homes of the children, and the child's progress is discussed with the parents.

A PROGRAM FOR IMPROVING THE BASIC EDUCATION SKILLS OF STUDENTS ON THE FT. BELKNAP INDIAN RESERVATION

An evening educational program for helping adults prepare for the GED Test Battery was initiated by the Hays-Lodge Pole school districts. Local teachers were employed for this purpose.

To make the program more attractive, courses in art and welding were included; however, all enrollees were required to take the English and math courses in addition to the other programs. Approximately 75 adults enrolled in the program. Approximately 50% passed the GED Test. In addition, the Department of Public Instruction administered the tests on the reservation.

MOBILE GUIDANCE LABORATORY

The Mobile Vocational Guidance Laboratory is financed under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-10). The basic purpose of the unit is to provide service in vocational and occupational counseling to high school students in this area. An additional objective of the program is to make teachers, parents and citizens more aware of the need for vocational training in the immediate

area as well as the state as a whole. With the increasing interest in area vocational schools, it is felt this program will bring about a more rapid development of such schools in North Central Montana.

The Mobile Center is scheduled to visit 24 high schools and Indian agencies in the six-county area for a designated number of days. (Prorated over a period of one school year on the basis of school enrollment.)

During each visit, the counselor would organize students to visit the Mobile Center in small groups representing their various vocational interests (example: business, aviation, mechanics, electronics, etc.) Each group of students is exposed to generalized group counseling including the utilization of 16mm film, slides, blackboard, overhead projection, etc. Secondly, each student would have the opportunity to view strip films, 16mm, transparency presentations and video and tape, etc. related to his or her particular interests. Thirdly, each student has the opportunity to view model displays, pamphlets, brochures, etc. in a browsing situation. Lastly, each student would have a chance to meet individually with the counselor to discuss matters of interest to him.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION REMEDIATION CENTERS

The Pupil Personnel Service Project is financed under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-10). The basic purpose of this project is to provide psychological services to schools in the ten counties in the project area to identify and aid children with learning disabilities. The project application proposes to do this in a number of ways: 1. provide assistance in providing remedial and corrective programs to children needing them; 2. assist guidance counselors in schools of the area in all ways possible; 3. encourage cooperation between local agencies for better understanding and communication on activities of school children; 4. assist in developing special education and remedial programs at the local level; 5. encourage in-service training of teachers by extension classes, workshops and other means; 6. evaluate individual children and determine programs for them in light of the learning problems that they may have.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

QUESTIONS:

Q. Who is eligible for services from the project?
A. Every child attending school, both public and private, in the ten-county area.

Q. Are services intended for only the educationally handicapped?
A. No, services are intended for all children with any special "problem". This may include the gifted and the physically handicapped as well as the slow-learner and the mentally handicapped. Bright children often have greater adjustment problems than average and below average children.

Q. How are services obtained?
A. By contacting the local school administrator, who will contact the project office serving his school. The Harlem Center serves Valley, Phillips and Blaine counties; Big Sandy serves Hill, Liberty and Chouteau counties; Conrad serves Toole, Glacier, Pondera and Teton counties.

Q. How is the individual child referred to the project?
A. The referral form may originate with the parent, teacher or principal. Forms are available from the local school superintendent or the project offices. The form should be completed in its entirety and signed by the parent and local school official authorized to do so. The form is then sent to the project office serving the school the child is attending.

Q. Must a referral form be completed on every child receiving service?
A. Yes, unless the child is to take a group test only. Individual tests will not be administered with out a properly completed referral form.

Q. What is meant by the phrase "evaluation of a child"?
A. This will vary with the individual child. Vision, hearing and individual IQ testing is basic, along with interviews with parents and teachers of the child to develop social and educational histories. Further testing and/or counseling will be done as indicated need on the basis of the basic tests.

Q. What use will be made of the information developed?
A. A written report will be sent to the school and other agencies approved by the parents. Project personnel will make suggestions on how to assist the child in their written report to the school. Further follow-up service will be provided upon request.

Q. Are any schools or children excluded from these services?
A. All schools in the ten-county area may receive services by simply writing a letter to the proper project office. No pupils are excluded from service unless the school they are attending chooses not to participate.

Q. Are parents informed as to test results?
A. Yes, parents are seen the same day the child is seen and a preliminary oral report is made at that time. The written report sent to the school is always available through their local school.

Q. Are copies of reports on children sent to any Federal agencies?
A. No, the reports are not sent to any agency other than the school unless the parents authorize the release of the report to another agency.

Q. Are people working in the project Federal employees?
A. No, they are hired and under the authority of the Harlem School Board and answerable only to them. The employees function under the School Laws of the State of Montana just like any other public school employee.

Q. Other than direct services to school children, does the project provide other services?
A. Yes, all project employees are available to local schools for consultant services. Personnel will assist any school in any way the local administrator feels they may be of service. The Reading Consultant and Guidance Consultant will very likely be most commonly used in this way, but the other employees will assist schools in every way possible.

Q. What in-service training will be available?
A. Extension courses will be arranged for through Northern and Eastern Montana College. Plans are being made for a summer workshop on the NMC Campus. One or two day workshops by project personnel and consultants will be arranged at the request of schools participating in the project.

Q. What personnel are employed in the project?
A. School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Guidance Consultants, Reading Consultant, Remediation Specialist and a Project Director are employed regularly in the project.

INDIAN EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The purpose of the Indian Education Conference held in Lewistown, Montana, on April 4 and 5, 1967, was to bring forth ideas for improving education for Indian youth. Participants were divided into four discussion groups, and each group considered four topics. Office of the State Superintendent personnel who led the discussion and the topics which they covered were William C. Howard, Indian Education Supervisor, "Discipline and the Indian Student"; Palmer M. Scott, Reading and Language Arts Supervisor, "Reading Foundations for Indian Students"; James W. Fitzpatrick, Director, Guidance Services, "Evaluating Scholastic Progress of the Indian Student"; and Phillip A. Ward, Jr., Director, Division of Instructional Services, "Motivating the Indian Student".

The "brainstorming" technique was employed whereby conference participants were encouraged to voice their opinions and ideas with judgment deferred. In accord with the philosophy that quantity leads to quality of ideas, people were asked to "free-wheel", to contribute many, many thoughts. Criticism was ruled out; positive statements were sought.

A handbook was prepared which synthesizes ideas and opinions expressed by the conference participants. Persons attending the APGA Convention received a copy of the handbook. Copies may be obtained by writing Mr. James W. Fitzpatrick, Director, Guidance Services, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana 59601.